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NEWSLETTER

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NONPROFESSIONAL AIDES HELP
MICHIGAN HEALTH SERVICES PROJECT

Nonprofessional aides, recruited from the population served, play a key role in a comprehensive health services project aimed at helping about 2000 low-income families around rural Baldwin, Michigan. The project was recently refunded by the Office of Economic Opportunity with a \$1,260,648 grant.

The Baldwin project is one of 13 rural comprehensive health services projects aided by OEO with a total obligational authority of \$11,251,000 throughout the United States. Another 36 neighborhood health centers are located in urban areas.

The innovative rural health center projects aim at supplying the poor with comprehensive health services and overcoming problems of professional manpower shortages, transportation and communication.

Created to serve about 2000 poor families, the project grew from one doctor, one nurse and 54 medical patients in the first month, April, 1968, to a staff of 73 and some 800 medical and dental patients a month just six months later.

Dr. R. Gerald Rice, director of the Michigan Department of Public Health, noted that 20 nonprofessional outreach aides at Baldwin "play an active role in casefinding, assisting families in recognizing health needs, arranging for appointments and transportation, and health education. They are sensitive to client reaction to service and feed back such information to assure that the service is responsive to consumer needs."

Other aides care for the chronically ill in their homes, provide home management services to tide a family over a temporary situation, assist staff members in various duties, and work with local public health sanitarians in helping families solve environmental problems involving houses, refuse disposal, water supply, heating, etc.

The training these nonprofessionals receive is useful in other job situations, Dr. Rice noted.

EXTENSION SERVICE PUBLISHES
"PLANNING FOR RURAL INDUSTRY"

What motivates industry to locate in a rural area?

How can a community create incentives to attract industry?

How can a community analyze its potential for industrial development?

What public development programs are available to communities who need assistance?

These are some of the questions probed in the 32-page publication, "Planning for Rural Industry," PA-894, a guide for Extension and citizen leaders active in community development.

Prepared by the Federal Extension Service, it is for use as an educational reference, rather than as a manual on specific procedures.

The booklet is available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 - Price 25 cents.

VEGETABLE CO-OP HELPS FARMERS TO NEW ECONOMIC PROGRESS

More than 700 Negro farmers are on the road to economic independence through their participation in local vegetable cooperatives in St. Francis and Lee Counties in Eastern Arkansas.

Both the St. Francis County Vegetable Growers Cooperative Association (started in 1965) and the Lee County Vegetable Co-op (started in 1967) received economic opportunity loans from the Farmers Home Administration -- for \$12,000 and \$40,000 respectively and were assisted by their local Technical Action Panels in getting started.

The two cooperatives have helped their members to break away from the lower earning crops they had traditionally grown. The low family incomes of the small farmers who joined the co-op showed appreciable growth. Family farmer Charlie Holeman of Lee County for instance may net more than \$5,000 this year compared to the less than \$3,000 he was receiving three years ago. Vegetables, the co-op, and a ready market, especially for okra, have made the difference.

OVER ONE-FIFTH OF RURAL COUNTIES TO GET MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 150 new Health, Education and Welfare Department sponsored rural community mental health centers recently received Federal construction and/or staffing grants. When all the centers are open they will serve almost 25 percent of the nation's 2,160 rural counties.

Most of the new rural centers will cover several counties by using mobile treatment teams or satellite clinics that will provide a comprehensive range of mental health services. Funded centers will serve 27 percent or 133 of the nation's 500 poorest counties (463 of which are rural).

EYE CLINIC BROUGHT TO RURAL COUNTY IN PILOT PROJECT

The citizens of rural St. Marys County, Maryland, were recently provided with a free 2-day eye clinic by a number of voluntary, service, medical and local governmental organizations. This was the second year for the pilot project and it accomplished more in two days of operation than it had in 2-1/2 days the year before.

Some 920 people from all over the county were examined for a variety of sight difficulties and 46 were referred for remedial eye treatment. The free examination was open to everyone. People who could not afford the remedial treatments were assisted financially to obtain them by the Lions Clubs International. Other major cooperating agencies included the U.S. Department of Agriculture; the George Washington University Hospital of Washington, D.C.; Red Cross Volunteers; the Society for the Prevention of Blindness; St. Marys County Public Health Service; St. Marys Medical Association and the Federated Women's Clubs of Maryland.

USDA is studying the potential of the St. Marys County project as a possible prototype for other rural counties.

TAP'S AND NUTRITION COMMITTEES WORK TOGETHER

Many state and county TAP subpanels on food stamp-nutrition education are working with long-established nutrition committees to extend food stamps and nutrition education to more needy families. Some long-time nutrition committees have been recently reactivated to implement an intensified nutrition program.

In Kentucky, 79 of the 120 county TAP's recently reported having nutrition committees. Guidelines were developed by the state panel to use in helping district and county TAP's to organize programs.

In Tennessee, the state TAP, in cooperation with the state nutrition council, has stimulated the development of programs in 51 county nutrition councils. All but one of the 95 counties has a food distribution program.

In New Mexico, the state nutrition committee is combining its efforts with TAP to serve as a standing committee of TAP. The committee will help local groups plan nutrition education programs, particularly for families receiving food stamps or federal commodities.

In Puerto Rico, nutrition education programs are being coordinated through joint nutrition committee-TAP cooperation. Local nutrition committees have been organized throughout the island and the Puerto Rico nutrition committee sends a monthly publication, "Inter-Com," to help nutritionists and home economists in their work with families receiving donated foods.

NEW HANDBOOKS AVAILABLE

"Comprehensive Planning Assistance Handbooks I and II," discussing revised policies and procedures under the 701 program, are available from the Community Relations Division, Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C. 20410.



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GRANT HELPS MISSOURI TO START MULTI-COUNTY PROGRAM

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently announced a grant of \$425,600 to assist the Missouri Department of Community Affairs in starting the first phase of its multi-county planning program.

The funds will provide 20 multi-county regions with financial and technical aid. Objectives are to carry out planning on regional goals of community water and sewer facilities, housing, zoning, and basic economic studies necessitated by rapid population growth. This multi-county planning effort will include an estimated 120 localities of less than 5,500 population.

AUTO TIRES USED TO CURB STREAM BANK EROSION

River and streambank erosion is frequently too expensive a problem to solve in remote rural areas -- one reason that soil particles are the major water pollutant in America's waterways and lakes today.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs near Anadarko, Oklahoma, was able to stabilize the eroding banks of the Washita River by tying old tires together with galvanized steel bands and blanketing the riverbank with them. The tires became embedded in the sediment and locust trees were planted among them. The river now carries a lot less sediment downstream and both the tires and raw banks are being covered by trapped sediment and vegetation.